DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 317 055 FL 018 398

AUTHOR Tardif, Claudette
TITLE French Language Minority Education: Political and Pedagogical Issues.
PUB DATE Mar 89
NOTE 32p.; Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association (San Francisco, CA, March 27-31, 1989).
PUB TYPE Viewpoints (120) -- Speeches/Conference Papers (150)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Bilingual Education; Constitutional Law; *Educational Policy; English (Second Language); Foreign Countries; French; Language Maintenance; Language Planning; *Minority Groups; *Political Influences; *Public Policy; *Second Language Programs; State Legislation
IDENTIFIERS *Canada

ABSTRACT

The political and pedagogical issues arising from language legislation, language policy, and language planning in a bilingual country such as Canada are analyzed. The socio-historical context of bilingualism in Canada is reviewed, and Section 23 of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms (appended), which imposes a constitutional requirement on each provincial legislature to provide instruction in the official minority language (French or English), is examined and interpreted. An analysis of the pedagogical issues includes consideration of the sociocultural factors determining the different success of minority and majority bilingual situations and the educational implications of native language maintenance in minority language groups. Finally, some implications arising from the pedagogical and political issues that relate to official minority language education are outlined. A list of over 60 references is included. (MSE)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED317055

FRENCH LANGUAGE MINORITY EDUCATION: POLITICAL AND PEDAGOGICAL ISSUES

BY

CLAUDETTE TARDIF

FACULTÉ SAINT-JEAN
UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

A Paper for Presentation to the
American Educational Research Association,
San Francisco, California
March, 1989

FL018398

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

C Tardif

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

☑ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

FRENCH LANGUAGE MINORITY EDUCATION:

POLITICAL AND PEDAGOGICAL ISSUES

Claudette Tardif

> If official bilingualism fails in its promise of providing basic and fair English-French choices across Canada, it will matter very little how many bilingual public servants can dance on the head of a pin in Ottawa or what pedagogical wonders are performed in French immersion: a major raison d'être of Canadian bilingualism will have gone, probably forever (Beaty, 1977,p.35).

Language issues have long been a source of socio-cultural tension in Canada. The federal government's move in 1970 to make Canada an official bilingual country was a means of attempting to reduce the conflict between the Francophone and the Anglophone population. The issue of language education has resurfaced in recent years as a result of changes made to the British North America Act of 1867 with the adoption in 1982 of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms. Section 23 of the Charter now imposes a constitutional requirement on each provincial legislature to provide instruction in the official minority language (French or English). The recognition of the principles underlying the intent of Section 23 and the mechanisms for the implementation of this right are a heated topic of public debate.

Questions regarding minority language education generally fall into two broad categories: political and pedagogical. The purpose of this paper is to consider both the political and pedagogical issues which arise from language legislation, language policy and language planning in a bilingual country such as Canada. This will include a short review of the socio-historical context of bilingualism in Canada as well as a

definition and interpretation of Section 23 of the Charter of Rights and Freedoms. An analysis of the pedagogical issues will include a consideration of the socio-cultural factors that determine the different success of minority and majority bilingual situations, and the educational implications of mother tongue maintenance in minority language groups. Finally, some implications that arise from the pedagogical and political issues that relate to official minority language education will be presented.

POLITICAL ISSUES

Bilingualism: Socio-Historical Context

One cannot deal with a topic such as official minority language education without seeking to situate the phenomenon within its socio-historical and political context. The goals and objectives of minority language education cannot be disassociated from the national goals and objectives of a country or region. For Bibeau (1982), every political or educational entity which has undertaken bilingual education has aspired to resolve a problem which normally has been linked to linguistic minorities. In a review of major issues related to language planning on an international level, Ashworth (1985) concludes that bilingual education is set up primarily to avoid open conflicts between a majority linguistic group and/or many minority linguistic groups.

In order to comprehend the social, political and educational issues that relate to bilingualism in Canada, it is important to be aware of the

demographic and geographic distribution of the two founding groups. The 1986 Statistics Report (Statistics Canada, 1986) lists the total Canadian population as more than 25 million people (25,309,330), with approximately 6 million (6,159,740) people claiming French as their mother tongue. The geographic distribution and concentration of the two groups vary considerably. Whereas the huge majority of the French population resides in Quebec (more than 5 million people), less than one million Francophones (842,815) live in other provinces. Citizens claiming English as their mother tongue are in the majority in all provinces and territories of Canada except Quebec with slightly less than 600,000 Anglophones (580,030). The bulk of the Anglophones in Quebec live in the highly urbanized, metropolitain area of Montreal whereas the Francophone population outside Quebec is spread throughout Canada with only limited areas of concentration in generally semi-rural areas of the provinces of New Brunswick, Ontario and Manitoba. The imbalance in the geographic, economic and social distribution of the two groups has often created tension and difficulties.

The French people in Canada have always struggled to retain their linguistic and cultural identity. Their efforts at resisting assimilation along with the efforts of the English-speaking majority to restrict French language usage has been and continues to be a source of tension. Conflicts of a linguistic nature continued even after Confederation. Bibeau (1982) gives as examples: the Louis Riel rebellion in Western Canada in the 1870-1880's, the Francophone resistance for conscription in the two World Wars, and the separatist movement in Quebec in the 1970's.

The current situation with Bill 101 in the province of Quebec is but another example of the on-going linguistic debate in Canada.

Recognizing the socio-cultural tension that was present, Prime Minister Lester Pearson in 1963 commissioned a national inquiry on bilingualism and biculturalism whose mandate was to find a political solution to Canada's socio-cultural problems. One of its recommendations gave rise to the Official Languages Act in 1970, which made Canada an official bilingual country and which gave to the two linguistic communities equal rights and status in the Canadian Parliament and in federal government agencies and institutions. It is important to note that no legislation for the recognition of minority language educational rights was written into the British North America Act of 1867. This guarantee came about only in 1982, in the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms. In the framing of Canada's constitution, education was considered a matter of provincial jurisdiction. Whereas the province of Quebec was quick to provide schooling at all levels for its English-speaking minority, this was not the case for the other provinces in respect to their French-speaking minorities.

Public acceptance of official bilingualism has been slow in forthcoming, althought recent studies indicate that there has been a favorable move in this direction. Relatively strong support for compulsory teaching of both official languages in schools has been reported, at least from the mid-1960's. Based on the results of a survey of 4000 Canadians conducted by Canadian Facts in the fall of 1985, Churchill and Smith (1986) report a strong degree of attachment to bilingualism by the Canadian public. To the question, "How important do

you think the ability to speak English and French is in helping a young person to get ahead in Canadian life today?", 80 per cent of English-speaking Canadians sampled responded "very important" or "moderately important". The survey shows that younger English Canadians were more positive in their attitudes than their elders. It is significant to note that the strongest levels of attachment to compulsory teaching of French as a second language is found among the group aged 35-49, i.e. the group which includes most families with children of school age. The great growth in enrolments in French-language immersion programs attests to this fact.

Churchill and Smith (1987, p.9) in their analysis of the Canadian Facts survey report that "willingness to support teaching of French and English as subjects in schools does not in and of itself indicate a measure of willingness to provide special services to a minority." In the same poll, English-speaking Ontarians were asked: "Should French residents of Ontario be entitled to have their children educated in their own language?" 68 per cent of English Canadians in Ontario answered yes to this question. This acceptance, however, is not necessarily representative of public attitude across the different regions of Canada. Aunger's (1988) analysis of linguistic problems in Western Canada describes the political culture of the West and especially of Alberta as differentiating itself significantly from the nation as a whole. Far less public support exists for services in the minority language in Western Canada. Efforts by Francophone parents in Alberta, for example, to obtain their own educational establishments has created a great deal of public furore as witnessed by newspaper articles and letters to their editor.

In their study of Canadian public attitudes, Simeon and Blake (1980, p.93) conclude that there are important regional differences on matters which relate to the use of the English and French languages. Where support for official bilingualism was increasing in the sixties and seventies elsewhere in Canada, support was slowly eroding in Western Canada. Simeon and Blake conclude that in the 1970-75 time period, only 37 percent of those in the three Prairie provinces could be described as having "conciliatory " attitudes to French-English relations. The Canadian Facts study conducted in 1985 for the Commissioner of Official Languages confirms this opposition. The study shows that Westerners are particularly opposed to official bilingualism at the provincial level. While a majority (61 percent) of Westerners supported services in both official languages at the federal level, only a minority (41 percent) agreed with such services at the provincial level.

Provincial governments (apart from Quebec and New Brunswick) have been particularly reticent in providing educational services to their official language minorities. The level of educational services available to minority Francophones outside Quebec is in some provinces virtually non-existent. In fact, some provinces in the past have actively pursued policies of assimilating the French minorities and of forbidding the use of the language. This then was the socio-historical and political canvas on which Section 23 of the Charter of Rights and Freedoms was adopted by the Canadian parliament in 1982.

Section 23: A Definition and Interpretation

In any discussion of Section 23 (see appendix), it is important to consider the fundamental objectives that the constitution wanted to attain and the category of persons that it sought to protect. In a review of recent court decisions regarding minority language educational rights, Foucher (1985, p.321) refers to the following Supreme Court of Canada decision:

> This set of constitutional provisions was not enacted by the framers in a vacuum. When it was adopted, the framers knew, and clearly had in mind, the regimes governing the Anglophone and Francophone linguistic minorities in various provinces in Canada so far as the language of instruction was concerned. They also had in mind the history of these regimes, both earlier ones... as well as more recent ones...

The preface to the joint declaration at the national premiers conference in Montreal in 1978 clearly indicates that the intention of Section 23 was to promote the principle of equality of the two official languages and to preserve the rights of the linguistic minorities.

> Each child of the French-speaking or English-speaking minority is entitled to an education in his or her language in the primary or the secondary schools in each province wherever numbers warrant. (Montreal Accord, first principle)

The Minister responsible for the constitutional project clearly stated:

> We are seeking to protect, once and for all, the education rights of Francophones outside of Quebec. The aim of this initiative is to provide Francophones outside of Quebec with approximately the same rights as Anglophones in Quebec.

The interpretation given by several constitutionalists (Bastarache et al., 1986; Foucher, 1985) and by recent judgements in Section 23 cases is that the intent of Section 23 was to put an affirmative action plan into place in the hope of reducing linguistic assimilation. The Ontario Court of Appeal (Education Act of Ontario and minority Language Education

Rights, 1984) recognized that linguistic assimilation was principally due to the poor possibilities of obtaining instruction in the French language and concluded that the new rights arising from Section 23 were created in response to this problem. In the case of the Quebec Association of Protestant School Boards v. Procureur général du Québec, (1984) the Court stated:

> ... Rightly or wrongly, - and it is not for the courts to decide,- the framers of the Constitution manifestly regarded as inadequate some- and perhaps all- of the regimes in force at the time the Charter was enacted, and their intention was to remedy by uniform corrective measures, namely those contained in s. 23 of the Charter, which were at the time given the status of a constitutional guarantee (Foucher, 1985, p.321).

PEDAGOGICAL ISSUES

The Influence of Socio-Cultural Factors

Bilingualism is not only a political solution to a nation's language problems but also an individual and societal phenomenon. Factors which contribute to linguistic assimilation or to bilingualism depend as much on sociological variables (e.g. political, economical, demographic) as on psychological variables (e.g. aptitude, motivation) and pedagogical variables (the school milieu).

The research literature indicates that successful language acquisition depends to a large extent on the relationships between the learner's first and second language. Schumann (1978) explains this relationship in terms of the social distances that hold between the learner's social group and the target language community. Giles et al. (1977) explain the relationship in terms of perceived social distance.

Like Gardner (1979), they consider motivation to be the primary determinant of second language proficiency. The level of motivation individual learners attain depends to a large degree on how they define themselves in ethnic terms (e.g. identification of the learner with his ethnic in-group, inter-ethnic comparison, perception of ethno-linguistic vitality, etc.).

Research results related to bilingualism have often been conflicting. Lambert (1975) proposed a theoretical framework which would help explain the conflictual nature of some of the findings. He affirmed that bilingualism could have positive or negative effects depending on the conditions under which bilingualism occurred. Thus, there were two types of bilingualism: additive and subtractive bilingualism. The addition of a second language without loss to one's first language and/or culture is known as additive bilingualism. This type of bilingualism is generally acquired by the ethnolinguistic majority group as exemplified by the situation of Canadian Anglophone students enroled in immersion programs. They are able to acquire a high degree of proficiency in the second language (French) without any adverse effects on their linguistic, cognitive and affective development. For individuals of the minority linguistic group, the experience of acquiring a second language (which is the dominant majority language of the milieu), can lead to subtractive bilingualism. As individuals become more and more exposed to the dominant language, the less chance they have of an adequate development in their maternal language. This can lead to negative cognitive and affective consequences. In a subtractive context, problems of ethnolinguistic identity may surface (Taylor, 1977; Lambert, 1977). According to certain

researchers (Cummins, 1978, 1979; Skutnabb-Kangas and Tookomaa, 1976), subtractive bilingualism can lead to "semilingualism" wherein the semilingual individual is cognitively impaired due to an incomplete mastery of either language. Cummins considers this type of bilingualism to be most often found among minority group children.

Landry (1987) expands Lambert's concept of additive bilingualism to take into account sociocultural aspects:

> Additive bilingualism in more than an individual phenomenon dealing with linguistic competence, affective characteristics, and cognitive functioning. Additive bilingualism must be related to the ethnolinguistic vitality of the linguistic group to which the individual belongs. It is as much a societal as an individual phenomenon (1987, p. 109).

Landry's definition of additive bilingualism considers the individual's active participation in his or her linguistic community:

> Complete additive bilingualism should encompass: (a) a high level of proficiency in both communicative and cognitive-academic aspects of L1 and L2; (b) maintenance of a strong ethnolinguistic identity and positive beliefs toward one's own language and culture while holding positive attitudes toward the second language; and (c) the opportunity to use one's first language without diglossia, that is without one's language being used exclusively for less valued social roles or domains of activity (Landry, 1987, p. 110).

Landry's model (1987) provides a framework to exlain the level and type of bilingualism which may be attained on an individual level. An individual will experience the relative vitality of each linguistic community through a network of linguistic contacts. Landry & Allard (1987) consider the relative contributions of the family milieu, the school milieu, and the socioinstitutional milieu on the formation of the individual's network of linguistic contact. This paper will consider more specifically the educational implications of mother tongue maintenance and the role of the school on the linguistic minority child's bilingual experience.

Educational Implications of Mother Tongue Maintenance

Academic achievement

In Canada, Francophone students in English schools or in mixed or bilingual schools have tended to perform considerably less well academically than Anglophone students. Statistics from the 1981 Census of Canada indicate that Francophones do not attain the same level of schooling as do Anglophones. Twice as many Francophones as Anglophones have less than a grade nine education (30% as compared to 15%) and fewer have completed a bachelor's degree or higher (6.1% as compared to 9.1%). A study undertaken by Alberta Advanced Education in 1984 on participation patterns at the postsecondary level indicates the lowest participation rate (apart from the native group) for postsecondary studies for students (in the age group 18-24) whose parents are of French mother tongue (30.2% English as compared to 25.8% French).

The underachievement of Francophones in Canada as compared to Anglophones can be related to the level of educational services received by Francophones in their mother tongue. Churchill, Frenette and Quazi (1985) in their comprehensive study Education et besoins des Franco-Ontariens: Le diagnostic d'un système d'éducation indicate that Francophones in bilingual or mixed schools succeed less well academically than their Anglophone counterparts and are often victims of linguistic assimilation. A recent study carried out by Carey (1987) indicates that minority Francophone students at the senior high level in a combined or

mixed program (immersion students and Francophone students) succeed less well in their English reading comprehension skills than either Anglophones in a combined program or Anglophone students solely in an immersion program. As well, the Francophone students in the combined program entered senior high school with lower French reading comprehension scores than either of the two other groups.

Schooling in one's first or second language will have different effects depending on the ethnolinguistic vitality of each of the communities and on the quantity and quality of linguistic contacts in the first and second language that an individual will have. Researchers like Landry (1985, 1987; Landry & Allard, 1987a, 1987b) propose a counterbalance model of bilingual experience for minority language children.

> ...additive bilingualism is only possible when the quantity and quality of contacts in L1 within the family milieu and the school milieu can compensate for the dominance of L2 within the socioinstitutional milieu .... School is an essential ingredient of additive bilingualism for minority group children (Landry, 1987, p. 111).

The counterbalance model calls for children to be schooled in their mother tongue and for the school ambiance to be completely unilingual in the first language so as to counterbalance the effects of the dominance of the second language in the larger milieu. There is a large body of research literature that indicates that minority children educated mainly in their first language not only better maintain their mother tongue but also learn the second language as well or better than minority children schooled exclusively in the second language (Cummins, 1984, 1986; Hamers & Blanc, 1983; Skutnabb-Kangas, 1984; Landry and Allard, in press).

The need for mother tongue schooling for minority group children has been strongly advocated by Cummins. He calls on the need for minority groups to become socially "empowered" so as to be able to offer strong pedagogical programs in the first language (Cummins, 1986). Cummins (1978, 1981, 1984) argues that in order to avoid the possible negative consequences of bilingualism on cognitive development, the child must attain a critical threshold of linguistic proficiency in the mother tongue. Cummins hypothesizes that a minimal threshold level of linguistic proficiency must be reached in both languages for bilingualism to have positive cognitive consequences. Due to the linguistic assimilation of generations of Francophones, parents of minority language children often do not serve as ideal models because they speak a mixed language which includes majority language interference and incomplete learning (Beniak, Carey & Mougeon, 1984). It cannot be assumed therefore that the minority language child has as well established first language skills as would a child in a comparable setting with parents who speak only the majority language. Schooling in the mother tongue is therefore essential to the minority language child in order to assure equality of educational opportunity.

Linguistic assimilation

Closely linked to the issue of additive bilingualism for minority groups is the issue of linguistic assimilation. For the French minority outside Quebec, this is closely linked to the educational structures which are made available to them.

Le Blanc (1988) identifies five types of schools available to Francophone parents outside of Quebec: 1) the homogeneous French school designed for students who are native French speakers and where the language of instruction is French and the role of the school is to strengthen the student's cultural identity. 2) the bilingual school, where the language of instruction is divided somewhat equally between French and English; 3) the mixed school, where the student clientele is made up of Francophone and Anglophone students who receive instruction in their respective languages but who are housed in the same facility and under the same administration; 4) the immersion school which is designed for Anglophone students who wish to learn French as a second language, and where French as the language of instruction begins in an intensive fashion in the early grades (80% of school time) but generally diminishes each year to reach a total of 30% teaching time at the secondary level; and 5) the homogeneous English school where English is the language of instruction for all classes except the French course.

It has become apparent to parents and researchers that the homogeneous French school is a key factor in reducing linguistic assimilation. For Magnet (1987):

> Mixed schools are principal institutions of French education in Anglophone Canada. They are cauldrons of assimilation. Courts, legislatures and executive commissions have found independently, on the basis of extensive expert evidence, that the grouping of Anglophones and Francophones together in mixed schools is harmful to the linguistic minority child and community and leads directly to assimilation (p.31).

Research findings (e.g. Churchill, Frenette and Quazi, 1985; Landry and Allard, 1987) would indicate that outside Quebec, the milieu is so predominantly an English language one that even when Francophones receive

instruction in French, they generally tend to identify with the majority dominant linguistic group. Problems of ethnolinguistic identity and cultural ambivalence often surface for minority Francophone children who are housed in mixed or immersion schools because they perceive their language to have less status politically, economically and socially in the larger environment. The minority status of Francophones in these schools can have many negative cognitive and affective consequences. As Porter, Porter and Blishen (1982) affirm:

> The Francophones in the English schools are constantly aware of their minority status, feel inadequate compared to their English-speaking peers, have a low academic self-concept and do not feel themselves capable of doing university work. The Francophones in the French-language schools, on the other hand, can forget about their minority status in the province, since it does not infringe on the classroom (p.269).

In much the same vein, Fitouri (1983) states:

> Qu'un bilingue fasse des associations d'infériorité ou de honte avec l'une des langues qu'il parle, cela peut avoir pour lui, quand il s'exprime dans cette langue, des effets préjudiciables....Il se peut qu'il se sente, par exemple, ridicule aux yeux des autres quand il emprunte cette langue et cela peut constituer pour lui une interférence intellectuelle dans cette langue (p.100).

A common myth among both Francophones and Anglophones is that Francophones need attend bilingual or mixed schools in order to learn English. Francophone parents have often believed that in assimilating to the majority group, they were providing better employment opportunities for their children. An interesting finding in a study carried out by Porter, Porter and Blishen (1982) is the finding that Francophone students in French-language schools perceived themselves to be better in their English language skills than their counterparts who were attending homogeneous English schools. Although this finding may at first appear discordant, it is important to remember that language is "mapped on" to

conceptual development. If students understand the concepts and the abstractions well in their first language, generally, they will easily be able to learn the corresponding vocabulary in the second language.

Francophone parents often have little choice as to which type of school they will send their children. In many provinces, immersion programs have been the only means by which Francophones could obtain French-language instruction. It was only with a great deal of reluctance that some provincial governments (e.g. Alberta in 1984) made a distinction between French immersion programs and French first-language programs. The policy of the Alberta government was to treat all minority languages, including French, in substantially the same manner. "French-language programmes might be offered, but they were to be open to all language groups" (Aunger, 1988, p.26).

IMPLICATIONS FOR FRENCH MINORITY LANGUAGE EDUCATION

The definition of French-language instruction

A question which educational planners and administrators have been faced with since the adoption of Section 23 is whether French immersion conforms to the intent of the Charter. Is it constitutionally permissible to offer French immersion to Francophones? The expression "instruction in French" (in the context of Francophones outside Quebec) is referred to no less than seven times in Section 23. It is important therefore that this expression be well understood and well interpreted. Some school boards

and immersion parents have taken the expression to mean that immersion programs ensure the rights of the French minority and that immersion parents meet the criteria of the category of persons receiving a right to French-language instruction under Section 23.

There appears to be much public misunderstanding of the intent of Section 23. Section 23 was established as a means of protecting the minority language community by assuring their educational facilities. Its intent was not to guarantee a right to the majority, to education in the minority official language (e.g. to Anglophone parents enroling their children in French immersion programs). Immersion programs are destined for English-speaking children wanting to learn French as a second language and cannot be considered to meet the rights of the minority as within the intention of Section 23. French immersion programs are thus given the status of a privilege and not a right for the majority group.

Another key issue is the definition of "minority language educational facilities". Many school boards interpret this as meaning a distinct program for Francophones within existing educational facilities and not as a separate educational facility. There are those who support French first-language instruction in the schools, but who see the call from French speaking parents for separate educational establishments for their children as being racist. What is misunderstood by the general population is that the coexistence of English- and French-speaking pupils under the same roof leads to linguistic interference and assmilation of the minority language group.

In Alberta, the overwhelming majority of schools that offer French-language instruction continue to be French immersion schools. There are

only three schools in the province that qualify as Section 23 schools: Ecole Sainte-Anne in Calgary, Ecole Maurice Lavallée in Edmonton, and Ecole Héritage in Jean Coté, a small community in northern Alberta. There are however several other requests from parents for French minority schools before local school boards in different areas of the province (Fort McMurray, Morinville-Legal, St. Paul).

Recent court judgements and interpretations give support to the concept of homogeneous schools for the linguistic minority group:

> ... the goal of section 23 was to give linguistic minorities the rights it entrenches in relation to instruction in their language, which rights also imply an environment and values transmitted through instruction .... immersion cannot meet this objective (Foucher, 1985, p. 337).

"Linguistic minorities now have a right to more than bilingual or immersion schools..." (Foucher, 1985, p.7). Although there is recognition of the right in principle, the application of that right is presently a major issue for government and local school boards. Educational planners and administrators need to face the question of homogeneous schools for the minority language group.

Governance by the Official Minority Group

When discussing educational facilities for official minority language education, the issue is not solely the question of homogeneous schools, but also of the right to take part in governing the schools. A principal cause of assmilation is the lack of effective control of French language education and facilities by French linguistic minorities. In the opinion of many constitutionalists (e.g. Foucher, 1985; Bastarache, 1986),

the nature of the right given in Section 23 includes the "criteria for access to minority language schools as well as the definition and management of the schools" (Foucher, p.8). This interpretation was confirmed in the judgement rendered by the Ontario Court of Appeal in Reference re Minority Language Educational Rights :

> Provincial legislatures, the Court said, have the duty to design educational facilities which can be said to be of, or to appertain to, the linguistic minority in that they can be regarded as being part and parcel of the minority's social and cultural fabric. The minority educational system must provide education of equal quality to that given to the majority. It is doubtful that linguistic mixing in instructional facilities can survive this ruling, and equally doubtful that the linguistic majority can continue to use its control of school governing structures to determine this issue against the linguistic minority (Magnet, 1987, p.31).

The issue of governance by the linguistic minority of their educational facilities has barely been considered by the political authorities outside the provinces of Ontario, Quebec and New Brunswick. In Alberta, for example, although both of the Section 23 cases which have been heard (Mahé, 1985; Mahé, 1987) recognize the right to governance where numbers warrant, the provincial government has shown no signs of providing leadership or direction on this issue. Francophones who wish to establish some form of control over the facilities and programs within their school system have the onus of negotiating a governance model with their school board.

The results in the case of "La Société des parents des écoles francophones catholiques d'Edmonton" have been unsuccessful and have led to resistance and conflict from both parties (cf. Press releases, November 1987). Negotiations were dropped when parents refused to accept a model proposed by the Edmonton Catholic School Board which stressed management rather than governance. Francophone parents objected to the

proposed model because it would give the proposed minority language council all the administrative burden and responsibility without providing for any decision-making power. Final decisions would remain with the chief superintendent and the school trustees. The "Société des parents francophones des écoles catholiques d'Edmonton" saw the proposed model as falling far short of the constitutional right provided in Section 23. Until governments are willing to give concrete directives to school boards regarding such questions as numbers, transportation, etc., school boards will continue to be faced with the issue of governance.

The Community Role of French-Language Schools

A key component in any definition of French-language schools is the relationship between language and culture. The Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism, noted that "Language is also the key to cultural development. Language and culture are not synonymous but the vitality of the language is a necessary condition for the complete preservation of a culture" (Book 2, 1969, p.8). Based on definitions proposed by Francophones,in the various provinces, of what constitutes a French-language school, Foucher (1985) identifies the two following characteristics: "it is designed for children whose mother tongue is French, and it is intended to strengthen the minority group's cultural identity" (p. 340).

The cultural role of the school in relation to the Francophone community has often been identified. The report of the Ministerial

Commission in Ontario on Secondary Education in French (Symons Report, 1972) states:

> L'école tient une place centrale dans la vie culturelle de la minorité linguistique. Par conséquent, il est important pour l'épanouissement culturel de la population francophone que les écoles jouent la part la plus complète dans ce domaine. Les écoles de langue française doivent vraiment être des écoles au service de la communauté, facilement accessibles à l'ensemble de la population, appartenant au groupe linguistique pour lequel elles ont été créées (p. 51.)

The concept of a community school, providing a strong link between education, language and the community, is necessarily interwoven with the concept of "des établissements d'enseignement de la minorité." For Francophones in a minority setting, the school is often the only lieu outside the home where they can meet in their language and culture. This is not the case for the English-speaking community, which has a wider sphere of resources in which to engage in their cultural activities and pursuits. Francophone parents view the concept of a community Francophone school as essential in assuring the ethnolinguistic vitality of the Francophone community and the Francophone school. This is an issue about which Francophone parents outside Quebec feel very strongly and which will most certainly be included in their requests for minority-language educational facilities.

The judicializing of education

The experience of minority-language education in Canada since 1982 does not reflect an acceptance by either the federal or the provincial

authorities to provide effective minority-language education within the letter and spirit of Section 23. The discrepancy between the constitutional provisions regarding language rights and the actual practice of these rights has led to the resolution of educational decisions through legal channels. This has led to what MacKay (1987) has referred to as "the judicializing of education." As of March 15, 1988, thirteen court cases relative to Section 23 of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms were heard.

Aunger (1988) considers that "recent linguistic problems in Western Canada, and particularly in Alberta, are rooted in an important divergence between law and practice, between legal rights and political attitudes." (p.1). This divergence has forced many Francophone parents to take strident actions (e.g. the Bugnet case against the Alberta government, which is currently before the Supreme Court of Canada; la "Société des parents francophones des écoles catholiques d'Edmonton" sit-in in the Spring of 1988 to protest the Edmonton Catholic School Board's decision not to implement a homogeneous French language school at the secondary level). As Magnet (1987) affirms: "Litigation in the education sector is inescapable for the Francophone minorities in the near future" (p.31).

The decisions rendered by the courts have generally tended to support the political climate in the province from which they originated (e.g. Mahé v. Alberta, 1985 and 1987; Commission des écoles fransakoises et al. v. P.G. Saskatchewan, 1988). As well, they have not not always agreed and cannot in any case be called conclusive. The courts have refused to impose obligations on governments on matters of educational policy. The judgements rendered to date (except for the Ontario decision) have all

been extremely cautious in their interpretation of Section 23. Foucher (1988, p.1) considers the judiciary attitude as depriving Section 23 of its judicial effectiveness and of bringing the minorities back to the political battlefield.

CONCLUSION

Beaty (1987) warns that Canada must act swiftly if it is to avoid "declaring collective bankruptcy" on the issue of minority language education. The questions are not made any easier by becoming "politico-judicial footballs" (Beaty, p.35). As educators, we need to be concerned with the fact that political issues are overshadowing pedagogical issues. An analysis of the political climate in Western Canada, and particularly in Alberta, clearly suggests an "avoidance" pattern on the part of the politicians to deal effectively with the issue of French minority language education (Alberta School Act, 1989). Unfortunately this avoidance pattern on the part of our political leaders becomes transferred to many local school boards who provide little or no educational services to the French linguistic minority group in their region. Lacking leadership and direction from political authorities, local authorities are often unwilling to move forward in providing French-language educational services. As well, due to the political and emotional nature of the whole language issue in Canada, school administrators often do not put into proper perspective many of the complex issues that are embedded in the whole question of official minority language education.

This paper has presented political and pedagogical issues that arise out of minority language education in Canada. For Francophone minorities outside Quebec, these include the issue of equality of educational opportunity and educational attainments, linguistic survival, and reinforcement of the cultural identity. Pedagogically, we all know the implications of schooling which does not answer the linguistic, cultural and educational needs of linguistic minorities: underachievement, low self-esteem, linguistic assimilation and cultural ambivalence. The research literature provides clear evidence on these points.

What role should administrators and school board officials play while waiting for the political and judicial players to finish sending each other the linguistic football and to get out of the judicial impasse? Certainly school boards and administrators need to begin informing themselves on the issues that relate to minority-language education so as to begin planning innovative administrative structures to language policy and language planning that will respect the rights of official minority language groups as within the spirit of Section 23. This implies structures that will provide for homogeneous French language schooling, the establishment of facilities that are by and for the minority and that allow for a measure of governance, and schools that allow the French community to play a major role. Just as attitude is a primary factor in determining a learner's success in second language learning so the attitude of the majority will be the determinant factor in determining the fate of French linguistic minority groups outside Quebec.

APPENDIX

Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms

Section 23: Minority Language Educational Rights

23. (1) Citizens of Canada

(a) whose first language learned and still understood is that of the English or French linguistic minority population of the province in which they reside, or

(b) who have received their primary school instruction in Canada in English or French and reside in a province where the language in which they received that instruction is the language of English or French linguistic minority population of the province, have the right to have their children receive primary and secondary school instruction in that language in that province.

(2) Citizens of Canada of whom any child has received or is receiving primary or secondary school instruction in English or French in Canada, have the right to have all their children receive primary and secondary school instruction in the same language.

(3) The rights of citizens of Canada under subsections (1) and (2) to have their children receive primary and secondary school instruction in the language of the English or French linguistic minority population of a province.

(a) applies wherever in the province the number of children of citizens who have such a right is sufficient to warrant the provision to them out of public funds of minority language instruction; and

(b) includes, where the number of those children so warrants, the right to have them receive that instruction in minority-language facilities provided out of public funds.

REFERENCES

Cases

Commission des écoles fransaskoises et al. v. P.G. Saskatchewan (1988).

Mahé v. Alberta (1987).

Mahé v. Alberta (1985).

Québec Association of Protestant School Boards v. Procureur général du Québec (1984) 10 DLR (4e) 321.

Statutes and legislation

Alberta. School Act. 1989.

British North America Act, 1867.

Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms: Constitution Act, S. 23.

Constitution Act, 1982

Education Act of Ontario and Minority Language Education Rights, 10, D.L.R. (4th) 491. 1984.

Official Languages Act. S.R.C. 1970, c. O-2.

Ontario. Education Act, RSO, 1980, c.129; Reg, 617-81.

Papers

Alberta Advanced Education. 1984. Participation Patterns Study. Report of the Committee to Examine Participation Trends of Alberta Post Secondary Students. Edmonton: Alberta Advanced Education Planning Secretariat.

Ashworth, M. 1985. Beyond Methodology. Second Language Teaching and the Community. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Aunger, E. 1988. Linguistic Problems of Western Canada: Language and Law in the Province of Alberta. Paper presented at the First International Conference on Comparative Linguistic Law, Montreal.

Bastarache et al. 1986. Les droits linguistiques au Canada. Montréal: Les éditions Yvon Blais Inc.

Beaty, S. 1987. "What Are We Waiting For?" Langue et Société. 19: 33-36.

Beniak, E., Carey, S., & Mougeon, R. 1984. "A sociolinguistic and ethnographic approach to Albertan French and its implications for

French as a first language pedagogy." Canadian Modern Language Review. 41(2): 308-315.

Bibeau, G. 1982. L'éducation bilingue en amérique du nord. Montréal: Guérin éditeur limitée.

Canada, Commissioner of Official Languages. 1984-88. Annual Report. Ottawa: Minister of Supply and Services.

Canadian Facts. 1987. "Data from the survey conducted at the request of the Commissioner of Official Languages." Langue et Société. 19: 41-44.

Carey, S. 1987. "Reading Comprehension in First and Second Languages of Immersion and Francophone Students." Canadian Journal for Exceptional Children. 3(4): 103-108.

Churchill, S. 1979. Les coûts de l'enseignement dans les écoles et classes de langue française. Toronto: Ministère de l'éducation.

Churchill, S. 1987. English and French in Canada: A Balanced Situation? Paper presented at the AERA conference in Washington, D.C.

Churchill, S., Frenette, N., & Quazi, S. 1985. Education et besoins des Franco-Ontariens: Le diagnostic d'un système d'éducation. Toronto: Le conseil de l'éducation franco-ontarienne, volume 1 et 2.

Churchill, S. and Smith, A. 1986. "The emerging consensus." Langue et Société. 18: 5-11.

Churchill, S. and Smith, A. 1987. The Time Has Come." Langue et Société. 19: 4-8.

Cummins, J. 1978. "Educational implications of mother tongue maintenance in minority-language groups." Canadian Modern Language Review. 34: 395-416.

Cummins, J. 1979. "Linguistic Interdependence and the Educational Development of Bilingual Children." Review of Educational Research. 49: 222-251.

Cummins, J. 1981. "The role of primary language development in promoting educational success for language minority students." In California State Department of Education, Schooling and language minority students: A theoretical framework. Los Angeles: Evaluation, Assessment and Dissemination Center.

Cummins, J. 1984. Bilingualism and special education: Issues in assessment and pedagogy. Clevedon, England: Multilingual Matters.

Cummins, J. 1986. "Empowering minority students: A framework for intervention." Harvard Educational Review. 56: 18-36.

Edmonton Catholic School Board. 1987. Proposed management model for Francophone Education.

Edmonton Journal. 1988. Letters to the Editor, March.

Fitouri, C. 1983. Biculturalisme, Bilinguisme et Education. Paris: Delachaux et Niestle.

Foucher, P. 1985. Constitutional Language Rights of Official-Language Minorities in Canada. Ottawa: Canadian Law Information Council.

Foucher, P. 1988. Six ans après: L'article 23 de la Chartre et les tribunaux. Synthèse des jugements au 15 mars 1988 et de l'état du dossier. Draft Paper.

Gardner, R. "Social psychological aspects of second language acquisition." In H. Giles and R. St. Clair (Eds.). Language and Social Psychology. Oxford: Basil Blackwell.

Giles, H., Bourhis, R. & Taylor, D. 1977. "Towards a Theory of Language in Ethnic Group Relations". In H. Giles (Ed.) Language, Ethnicity and Intergroup Relations. New York: Academic Press.

Giles, H. and Byrne, J. 1982. "An intergroup approach to second language acquisition." Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development. 3: 17-40.

Hamers, J. and Blanc, M. 1983. Bilingualité et Bilinguisme. Bruxelles: Mardaga.

Lambert, W. 1975. "Culture and language as factors in learning and education." In A. Wolfgang (Ed.), Education of immigrant students. Toronto: Ontario Institute for Studies in Education.

Lambert, W. 1977. "The Effects of Bilingualism on the Individual: Cognitive and Sociocultural Consequences." In P.A. Hornby (Ed.), Bilingualism: Psychological, Social and Educational Implications. New York: Academic Press.

Landry, R. 1985. Pour une politique de l'enseignement des langues dans les écoles publiques du Nouveau-Brunswick. Fredericton: New Brunswick government.

Landry, R. 1987. "Additive bilingualism, schooling, and special education: A minority group perspective." Canadian Journal for Exceptional Children. 3(4): 109-114.

Landry, R. and Allard, R. 1984. Bilinguisme additif, bilinguisme soustractif et vitalité ethnolinguistique." Recherches Sociologiques. no. 2-3: 337-358.

Landry, R. and Allard, R. 1987a. "Développement bilingue en milieu minoritaire et en milieu majoritaire." In L. Péronnet (Ed.), L'école contribue-t-elle à maintenir la vitalité d'une langue minoritaire? Moncton: Centre de recherche en linguistique appliquée.

Landry, R. and Allard, R. 1987b. Etude du développement bilingue en milieu minoritaire et en milieu majoritaire." In L. Péronnet (Ed.), L'école contribue-t-elle à maintenir la vitalité d'une langue minoritaire? Moncton: Centre de recherche en linguistique appliquée.

Landry, R. and Allard, R. (in press). Can schools promote additive bilingualism in minority group children?" In L. Malave & G. Duquette (Eds.), Language, culture, and cognition: A collection of studies in first and second language acquisition for educators in Canada and the United States.

Le Blanc, J. 1988. "Un mythe à détruire." Langue et Société. 22: 24-25.

MacKay, A. 1987. "The Charter of Rights and Special Education: Blessing or Curse?" Canadian Journal for Exceptional Children. 3(4): 118-127.

Magnet, J. 1987. "The Future of Official Language Minorities in Canada." Langue et Société. 19: 29-32.

McMahon, F. 1988. Le role des enseignants devant l'éducation française. Communication présentée au colloque de l'Alberta Teacher's Association sur l'éducation française, Edmonton, Alberta.

Porter, J., Porter, M. & Blishen, B. 1982. Stations and Callings: Making it Through the School System. Toronto: Methuen.

Report of the Ministerial Commission in Ontario on Secondary Education in French. 1972. Toronto: Minister of Education.

Report of the Royal Comission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism. Book II. Education. 1986. Ottawa: Queens Printer.

Schumann, J. 1978. "The acculturation model for second language acquisition." In R. Gingras (Ed.), Second Language Acquisition and Foreign Language Teaching. Arlington, VA.: Center for Applied Linguistics.

Simeon, R. and Blake, D. 1980. "Regional Preferences: Citizens' Views of Public Policy." In David J. Elkins and Richard Simeon (Eds.), Small Worlds: Provinces and Parties in Canadian Political Life. Toronto: Methuen.

Skutnabb-Kangas, T. 1984. "Why aren't all children in the nordic countries bilingual?" Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development. 5: 301-315.

Skutnabb-Kangas, T. and Toukomaa, P. 1976. Teaching migrant children's mother tongue and learning the language of the host country in the context of the socio-cultural situation of the migrany family. Helsinki: The Finnish National Commission for UNESCO.

Société des parents des écoles francophones catholiques d'Edmonton. 1987. Mémoire présentée à la Commission scolaire des écoles catholiques d'Edmonton.

Statistics Canada. 1981. School Attendance and Level of Schooling, 1981 Census of Canada.

Statistics Canada. 1986. Language Part I.

Taylor, D. 1977. "Bilingualism and Intergroup Relations." In P.A. Hornby (Ed.), Bilingualism: Psychological, Social and Educational Implications. New York: Academic Press.